

House Committee Approves FY 2005 Appropriation Bill

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

The House Appropriations Committee approved the bill passed out of the subcommittee with minimal changes. The bill retained the \$2.268 billion for the National Park Service recommended by the subcommittee. This represents a \$9.2 million increase from the FY 2004 enacted budget and a decrease of \$92.7 from the President's Request.

The bill provided \$1.686 billion for the Operation of the National Park System, an increase of \$76.5 million from the FY 2004 enacted level and is the amount recommended in the President's budget. To provide certain increases and stay within the funding level of the President's budget request, the committee redirected funds in the ONPS appropriation. An additional \$32.65 million in across-the-board park base increases were offset through removal of selected increases from the budget. The House eliminated base program funding of \$7.9 million for the Resource Restoration Challenge Cost Share and did not approve funding for the following increases:

- Incident Management, Analysis and Reporting System, \$2.2 million
- Regional Criminal Investigations, \$1.2 million
- VIP Regional Coordinators and Senior Ranger Program, \$850,000
- Repair/Rehabilitation projects, \$8.16 million
- Hazardous Structures Removal, \$3 million
- General Facility Maintenance, \$1.75 million
- E-Government Initiatives, \$871,000
- Management Accountability Review
- Regular Challenge Cost Share, \$2 million
- Lewis & Clark Challenge Cost Share, \$94,000
- Resource Restoration Challenge Cost Share \$4.1 million

The redirected funding combined with the requested \$22 million in specific park base increases, results in almost \$55 million in additional funding for parks in FY 2005.

The Committee included \$53.87 million for National Recreation and Preservation, an increase of \$16.1 million over the request and a decrease of almost \$8 million below the FY 2004 enacted level. Changes were primarily in the area of heritage area funding and statutory assistance.

A total of \$34.57 million is provided for the Historic Preservation Fund, which represents a decrease of \$2 million from the FY 2004 enacted level and a decrease of \$6 million below the request. This included the elimination of \$10 million in funding for Preserve America Grants and the addition of \$4 million for Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Construction received \$297.6 million, a decrease of 32.251 million below the FY 2005 enacted level and a decrease of \$32.252 below the request. Line-item construction was approved at a funding level of \$181.9 million. The Committee also included bill language which place restrictions on partnership construction projects. Any partnership project with a total value in excess of \$5 million may not proceed without advance, written approval of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. The Flight 93 Memorial is excluded from this restriction.

The committee recommended \$107.5 million for land acquisition and State assistance, a decrease of \$70.6 below the budget request and \$28.1 million below the enacted level. This funding includes \$91.5 million for assistance to States and \$16 million for land acquisition activities, primarily administrative expenses. No funds are provided for acquisition of new lands.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee had previously approved the bill on Wednesday, June 3, 2004.